

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2386

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR

USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGSZC PFOR, PINT, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY MARCH 22-24

1. IRAQ. SYRIAN MEDIA DURING ENTIRE THREE DAY PERIOD LED WITH SHARP ATTACKS ON IRAQI GOVERNMENT, THROWING COLD WATER ON REPORTS WHICH SURFACED IN KUWAITI PRESS INDICATING SYRO-IRAQI RECONCILIATION MAY BE IN OFFING (DAMASCUS 1830). PRESS HEADLINED: "IRAQI CITIZENS IN EGYPT DEPLORE MEASURES OF ASSASSINS REGIME IN BAGHDAD AND EXPOSE ITS COMPLICITY WITH CIA." DISMISSAL OF TWO MEMBERS OF IRAQI BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND PROVIDED MORE GRIST FOR THE PROPAGANDA MILL. AL-BAATH BANNERED: "TWO PROMINENT MEMBERS RULING PARTY COMMAND DISMISSED BECAUSE OF THEIR OPPOSITION TO SADDAM TIKRITI'S UNCLASSIFIED

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POLICY AND BLOODTHIRSTINESS." LIBERALLY DISTORTING IRAQI NEWS AGENCY REPORTS, ARTILCE DEPICTED IRAQI MINISTERS AS SCRAMBLING TO DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM THE TIKRITI GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE INEVITABLE DELUGE. ARTICLE HARKED BACK TO ALLEGED NEWS REPORTS WHICH APPEARED BEFORE TWO MINISTERS DISMISSED CLAIMING THAT SOME COMMAND MEMBERS HAD ACCUSED SADDAM HUSSEIN OF "INDIVIDUALISM,

DICTATORSHIP, LUST FOR KILLING, DISRESPECT
FOR GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS, CONTEMPT FOR THE PARTY
COMMAND AND PROPENSITY FOR UNILATERAL DECISIONS." SYRIAN
PRESS, OF COURSE, SAW DISMISSALS AS CONFIRMING THESE REPORTS.

2. PALESTINIANS. AL-BAATH EDITORIAL SAW PRESIDENT CARTER'S
CALL FOR PALESTINIAN HOMELAND AS APPROPRIATE POINT OF
DEPARTURE. "THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT HAS TENTATIVELY MADE
CLEAR HIS CONVICTION OVER RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO HAVE
HOMELAND AND HAS IMPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGED POLITICAL PRESENCE
OF THE STRUGGLING PEOPLE. THIS IS CORRECT BASIS FOR SOLUTION
IF TAKEN AS DEPARTURE POINT FOR DISCUSSING PEACE ARRANGEMENTS
AND IF OTHER SIDE IS MADE TO RESPECT IT. THERE WOULD BE
NO SENSE IN DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM ON ANY LEVEL WITHOUT
DISCUSSING REQUIREMENTS OF PALESTINIAN PRESENCE BOTH INSIDE
AND OUTSIDE THE OCCUPIED LAND AND EXAMINING THEIR RIGHTS."

3. MUHAMMAD ZUAYTAR WHO OFTEN COMMENTS IN AL-BAATH ON
PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS IMPLIED THAT PLO COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT
END OF PNC SHOULD BE TAKEN AS MODERATE STATEMENT. HE
OPINED, "NEWS AGENCIES HAVE MADE NO MENTION OF QUESION
PUT TO ALLON BY AN EEC AMBASSADOR AS TO WHETHER THE PNC
POLITICAL COMMUNIQUE HAS ANY PHRASE ON DESTRUCTION,
DISSIPATION, AND DEPLETION OF ISRAEL. WHAT AGENCIES AND
PAPERS FOCUSED ON WAS CHANGING PHRASE 'NATIONAL AUTHORITY'
TO THAT OF 'INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE.' SO WITH
WHAT PHRASE HAS ISRAEL BEEN ANNOYED SINCE NOT A SINGLE
WORD EXISTS IN COMMUNIQUE ABOUT DESTRUCTION AND DISINTEGRATION?
IT IS DELIBERATE MISTKE BECAUSE ISRAELI ELECTIONS ARE
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APPROACHING OR IS IT REFLECTION OF ISRAEL'S APPREHENSIONS
FROM ANY PEACEFUL ARAB GESTURE?"

4. ELECTINS IN INDIA. SYRIAN COLUMNISTS EXPRESSED MARKED
DISMAY AT DEFEAT OF INDIRA GANDHI, PERHAPS, INDICATING ARABS
FEW NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE LESS SUPPORTIVE OF
ARAB POSITIONS. THAWRA COLUMNIST SAW FOREIGN INTERESTS
BEHIND HER DEFEAT. HE STATED, "WESTERN STATES AND WORLD
IMPERIALISM STOOD CLEARLY ON SIDE OF OPPOSITION AND EVEN
WON OVER MRS. GANDHI'S RELATIVES AND DROVE THEM TO ENTER
ELECTIONS AGAINST HER. THIS POSITION WAS, OF COURSE,
DICTATED BY MRS. GANDHI'S NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN POLICY AND
HER SUPPORT FOR WORLD LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. MRS. GANDHI'S
LOSS AND END OF HER PARTY'S RULE WILL LEAVE ITS TRACES
ON THE WORLD POLITICAL SCENE, ESPECIALLY THE NON-ALIGNED
COMMUNITY."
MURPHY

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